

Contribution of Complementary Elementary Education towards Transition of Nomadic Pupils from Non-Formal to Middle School Education in Habero Sub-Zone, Eritrea

Tesfu Tekle¹, Mukirae Njihia¹, Norbert Ogeta¹, Michael Habtu²

1. Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, School of Education, Kenyatta University, P.O.Box 43844-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

2. Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, P.O.Box 62000-00200, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Background: Education in Eritrea is a fundamental right of every person. Therefore, ensuring equal and equitable educational opportunities for every citizen is essential for upward mobility. However, enrolment in areas inhabited by the nomadic groups is far less from the national average. To boost enrolment among the nomads and to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) the government of Eritrea along with donor partners in 2007 introduced non-formal Complementary Elementary Education (CEE) targeted at out-of-school children aged 9-14 years. Nevertheless, no study was conducted since the program has started whether the children are mainstreamed to formal middle school primary education. **Objective:** The study was aimed to assess the enrollment and transition rate of CEE, examine challenges of transition and to identify possible alternatives to facilitate transition of pupils to formal middle school education in Habero Sub-Zone. **Materials and methods:** Mixed method design along with the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches was employed. Semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect information on socio-demographic characteristics of pupils and CEE teachers, challenges and alternatives of transition to middle school. Moreover, key informant interview was carried out from the middle school director and sub-zone education officer. The sample size included were 150 pupils, 18 teachers, 1 middle school director and 1 sub-zone education officer. The data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data were transcribed and coded and then analyzed thematically. **Results:** The study findings indicate that the transition rate of pupils from the CEE centers to formal middle school education was high (83%). However, the enrollment of pupils transitioned from CEE centers in the available middle schools of the sub-zone was low (35%). **Conclusion:** The low enrollment in middle school was contributed by distance of middle school, early marriage and economic status of the community. Finally, based on these findings, it is recommended that CEE centers at the very distance should develop to formal middle school. Establishment of at least one boarding school in Habero sub-zone to accommodate the most disadvantaged nomadic children would ease economic burden of the pupils. Furtherer, government authorities, national unions and religious bodies should play important role in sensitizing the community about benefits of education.

Keywords: Complementary Elementary Education, Nomadic Pupils, Transition to Middle School

1. Introduction

Nomads are ethnic or socio-economic groups who constantly travel and migrate in large or small groups in search of means of livelihood within a community or country or across international boundaries (Carl-Hill and Peart, 2005). They are among the indigenous hard to reach groups of hunters, gatherers, pastoralists and fishermen (Dyer, 2006; Sharma, 2011; Aikman, 2011). Carl-Hill and Peart (2005) reported that nomadic groups of the hunter/food gatherers, itinerant workers, and pastoralist types are found in large numbers in at least 20 countries in Africa. It was estimated that about six percent of the total population in Africa lives nomadic life styles (De Souza, 2006; Carl-Hill, 2005). Furthermore, according to the report by UNICEF ESARO (2007) and Carl-Hill (2005) it was estimated that there were 20 million nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists in six countries of eastern Africa alone.

Eritrea is a country located in the North-Eastern Part of Africa (the Horn of Africa) bordered by Sudan to the west and north, Ethiopia to the south, Djibouti to the south east and Red Sea to the east. It has an area of 121,320 km² and 1200 km coastline in the Red Sea. Its population is estimated about six million (2014 estimation) in which 80% of the population are based their economy on sedentary agricultural activities and nomadic pastoralism. The nomads are estimated about 20-30% of the total population of the country (Carr-Hill, 2005). Modern education in Eritrea was introduced by the European missionaries in the middle of 19th century. However, its coverage was limited to towns and formally settled villages. For instance, as historical books indicate the Swedish Evangelical Missionaries were established the first school around the port of Massawa in 1866. During the armed struggle (1961-1991), though it was limited only to the liberated areas, the nomads were part of the literacy campaign by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (E.P.L.F) (MOE, 2008). Thus the nomads were among the most disadvantaged group of the society. After independence of the country from Ethiopia in 1991, however, in line with the education policy of the government to ensure education access to every citizen, the nomads are among the first priorities (MOE, 2008).

Though the extent of practice is different, nomadic way of life is common among the nine ethnic groups of Eritrea (Tekie and Zerai, 2002, as cited in MOE, 2010a). The most defined Eritrean nomads are Hidareb, Tigre, Rashaidda, Afar, and to some extent Saho ethnic groups (MOE, 2010a). The nomads are commonly found in eastern lowlands along the Red Sea coast, western lowlands along Ethiopia and Sudan borders and Sahel highlands of Eritrea.

According to Fre and Musa (1997, as cited in MOE, 2010a), based on their mobility and production systems, nomadic pastoralists in Eritrea are categorized under five groups. First, *Sebec-sagim*- characterized by long distance mobility as up and down hill and it is very common in Sahel and other parts of the Northern Red Sea Region. Second, Valley bounded system- characterized by the up and down valley movements around defined areas and it is practiced throughout Ghash Barka and some parts of Anseba Regions. Third, Cross-border nomads- it involves only herders of cattle and camel who move with their livestock to different areas. They mostly cross borders to Sudan and Ethiopia during the dry seasons in Eritrea. Fourth, Coastal pastoralists- it is practiced along the Red Sea coastal areas mainly combine fishing and salt trade in addition to livestock. Fifth, Highland pastoralist- it is common throughout the highlands and it combines livestock with farming.

Moreover, search of pasture and water are not the only factors for the movement of nomadic pastoralists. Nevertheless, they move to keep themselves away from human and animal diseases and transmission as flies, mosquitos, transmitted diseases, weather conditions, overgrazing, trading, labor, farm and many other factors. Therefore, they might not prefer to go to large villages even if they have no livestock in their village (MOE, 2010a).

Even though education is considered as human right both at national and international levels (Tahir, 2006), due to their specific socio-economic and cultural characteristics, the nomadic pastoralists are defined under the highly disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups. Carr-Hill (2005) described the nomads as they represent a particular challenge for the whole nation or worldwide development and the national and international target of achieving Education For All (EFA) by the year 2015. Reaching them with formal schooling has become a major challenge, and as a result millions of nomadic pastoral children remain outside the education system (Kratli, 2001). To this end, many researches indicate that the challenge becomes worse in the developing countries in which most of the governments try to provide the educational need of the nomadic societies under the policy of formal education system (Carr-Hill, 2005; Kratli, 2001).

However, school based formal education system is hardly to be adopted by the nomadic communities in which the school calendar and curriculum content is different from their way of life style and traditional values (Tahir, 2006; Carr-Hill and Peart, 2005; Kratli, 2001 and Jama, 1993). UNESCO (2002) and Levin and Lockheld (1993) argued that the implementation of standard curriculum designed for urban children might not have relevance for rural and other disadvantaged societies. Their small population size and widely dispersed, makes it economically unfriendly to provide training and education for nomads. Moreover, the mobility of nomads and pastoralists is a significant issue in case of education. This can be daily mobility, such as the movements of Eritrean shepherders (Oxfam, 2005), or seasonal mobility at least for the most part of the year and moves away from the formal school location and the children plays an important economic role on household herd and have no time for school (Hassan Arero, 2005).

To overcome the burden of access to primary education among the nomadic communities, many countries have attempted different intervention strategies to meet the EFA and MDGs. For instance, the use of mobile nomadic schools and establishment of boarding schools have been experimented in many countries of the world: Mongolia, Iran, India, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda are least examples (Dyer, 2006; Tahir, 2006; Sifuna, 2005; Carr-Hill 2005; and Kratli, 2001).

To reach the nomads the governments of Eritrea and donor partners have adopted many approaches and alternatives of making education accessible to them. Such approaches include the introduction of boarding schools and mobile schools. According to Carr-Hill (2005), boarding schools are intended to address mobility of nomads. However, boarding schools have their own drawbacks with the situation of nomads. In general, studies indicated that parents and students don't like to be separated. Moreover, parents and elders mistrust of the fact that boarding schools have no cultural attachment with them and the absence of children eliminates their usual economic inputs to the family life (Carr-Hill and Peart, 2005). Pastoralism is labor-intensive, and children's contribution to the work is important. It is exacerbated in the case of girls. It is girls, who walk great distances to fetch water for domestic use, and who also play a major role in watering the animals; this makes their labor an important contribution to the household economy. Thus, sending children to boarding schools makes opportunity costs are high (Oxfam, 2005). Provision of formal education through boarding and mobile schools, therefore, have not resolve the trade-offs between the formal education and the family business (Siele et al., 2011).

In Eritrea the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of regions inhabited by nomads is still much lower than the national average (Carr-Hill, 2005). Schooling is a very recent social norm in nomadic areas where schools are generally characterized by low enrolment, especially that of girls account only for 20%. In some nomadic areas the GER is 36% less than the national average (ADF, 2004). To enhance enrolment among the nomads and to capture all children who passed the legal age of school entry, the government of Eritrean and its donor partners initiated more flexible non-formal form of education which is known as the Complementary Elementary Education. The pilot nomadic education and complementary elementary education have accelerated access to education for out-of-school and hard-to-reach children living in remote areas (UNICEF Annual Report for Eritrea, 2010). According to the report, an estimated 6,500 students study in 60 Complementary Elementary Education learning centers, improving access for children previously left out of school (UNICEF, 2010).

However, as per to the most recent school data marked that a NER of 49.6% which indicated that about half of the elementary school-age children are still out of school and further the data indicates that the NER for middle school is only 29.2%. Out of six Regions of the country the middle school NER for the four Regions namely Anseba, Gash Barka, Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea in which they are inhabited by nomadic groups are 28.0, 16.9, 11.6 and 13.1 respectively. Their deviation from the national average is, -1.2, -12.3, -17.6 and -16.1 respectively (MOE, 2010b).

Therefore, in 2007 the government has introduced Complementary Elementary Education which is an accelerated non-formal education provision for over-aged children between 9 and 14 years old in nomadic areas. Instead of the 5 years national curriculum, students learn the accelerated curriculum in 3 years after which they mainstreamed to formal schools (UNICEF, 2012). It operates under the Department of Adult and Media Education of the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2010a). The curriculum of CEE is a

revised curriculum integrates life skill education and female genital mutation (FGM). Since its inception in 2007, CEE has increased its coverage as well as the quality of education provided. This is as a result of a strong commitment of the Department of Adult Education and Media, MOE and support of UNICEF and guided by the Education Sector Development Program. At the end of the 2010/11 academic year, 6,620 children (47% girls) were enrolled in 64 learning centers across the nomadic areas of the country (UNICEF, Eritrea, 2012). The students in the CEE are expected to join the formal education at grade six through continuous classroom assessment by studying the condensed three year curriculum, which was modified from the five-year national curriculum.

Complementary Elementary Education program in Anseba Region operates under its local name “Ariyom” derived from the Tigre language taken from a poem by a local man. Its meaning is to follow and join the students of your age by attending the crashed curriculum of 5 years in to 3 years. It was started in 2007/2008 academic year after inspired by such same activities in the Northern Red Sea Region in 2006/2007. These two neighboring regions share some living characteristics in which both inhabited by nomadic pastoralists. CEE practiced in 33 learning centers in 8 sub-zones out of the 11 sub-zonal administration of the Region. The study was therefore, carried out to assess the contribution of these Complementary Elementary Education learning centers on transition of the over-aged children of the nomads from non-formal primary education to formal middle school primary education in Habero Sub-zone, Anseba Region.

Hence the study was guided by the following research questions:

- What is the transition rate of pupils from the CEE learning centers to formal middle school education?
- What are the main challenges that can influence the transition of pupils from CEE learning centers to formal middle school education?
- What alternative strategies could be taken to facilitate the transition of pupils from CEE learning centers to formal middle school education?

2. Objectives of the study

The study was based on the following objectives:

- i. To determine the transition rates of children from the CEE learning centers to formal middle school education.
- ii. To examine challenges that influences the transition of pupils from the CEE learning centers to formal middle school education.
- iii. To identify possible alternatives to facilitate the transition of pupils from CEE to formal middle school education.

3. Materials and Methods

In this study, descriptive survey method was employed using mainly quantitative substantiated with qualitative data from key informants. Different instruments of data collection were used to maximize the worth of the data used in the study. The quantitative data were gathered through semi-structured questionnaire. A semi-structured interview guide was also employed to obtain information from the middle school director and sub-zone education officer. A variety of documentary sources was also reviewed in order to secure relevant data for analysis and to substantiate the validity of the primary data.

A total of 150 pupils were participated in the study. The sample size was calculated using Fischer et al. (1991) formula and adjustment was made. In addition, all the CEE teachers (18) were included in the study. The pupils were selected using systematic sampling method until the desired sample size was attained. The data collected through questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20.0). The study used descriptive analysis using frequency and proportions for the quantitative data. The findings were presented in the form of tables and graphs. Qualitative data was categorized and analyzed according to themes to complement quantitative data.



Complementary Elementary Education (CEE) classrooms in Habero Sub-zone: Filfle

Source: Researcher, 2015

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics among the 3rd year CEE pupils

The socio-demographic attributes of the pupils is summarized in Table 1. More than half 87(58%) were within the age group of 14-16 years, 54(36%) were within the age group of 11-13 years while the age group of 8-10 years were 9(6%). The figure 87(58%) indicates that most of the pupils start education after they are ten years old in which they are supposed to be in grade six if they were

started at age six. It is worth to note that, though, the aim of CEE program is to create an opportunity for those 9-14 years old children out of school, the regular ages (age 6, 7 and 8) children are also enjoying this opportunity. The education officer of the sub-zone said, *"this is mainly, most of the families do not want to send their children to formal schools at a distant places instead they prefer the nearby CEE centers and they consider it as formal school. The small children also resist being separated from their old siblings. They want to be guarded on their way to and from school"*. Further, he stated that this situation remains the main challenge to serve the regular age children with the crushed curriculum prepared meant to serve the over- aged children 9-14 years old. In this study more males 86(57.3%) were participated than females 64 (42.7%). This indicates that there is still persistence in gender disparities.

In relation to the number of siblings of the pupils, 32(21.3%) have 2-4 siblings, 91(60.7%) have 5-8 siblings and 27(18%) have 9 siblings and above. This means that 78.7% of the respondents have above 5 siblings. This indicates that there is too much competition on limited resources to invest in education and high opportunity costs for those going to school. According to the key informant interviews, it was reported that polygamy is common in the community and one man could have more than 10 children from two or three wives in which their age is at a very small gap. This makes it difficult to send them to school all together at the same time. Pupils were also asked to indicate if they have siblings attending middle school and 53(35.3%) have one, 35(23.3%) have two, 15(10%) have three, 14(9.3%) have four and 33(22%) have none of their siblings in middle school. The 22% having none of their siblings in middle school could indicate that there is a significant number of children do not enrolled in schools.

Further the study sought to inquire more information on whether the pupils have siblings completed middle school. Majority 122(81.3%) didn't have had siblings completed middle school while only 28(18.7%) had siblings completed middle school. The figure 81.3% signifies that there are less continuation opportunities for the children of the nomads. This strongly agrees with the statements made by many scholars that indicate nomads are the most disadvantaged group of community among society of a country. Similarly, according to UNICEF report in Eritrea the National NER is largely affected by the low enrolment ratio in the nomadic areas of the country (UNICEF, 2012).

Most 129(86%) of the respondents were found to be willing to join and continue their middle school education in the formal schools. This implies there is high motivation towards formal education among the nomadic children. The table further indicates 134(93.3 %), 117(68%) and 135(90%) of the pupils got parents' support for formal education, encouragement on doing homework at home and their parents' willingness for further education respectively. These positive responses strongly agree with the statement made by Kratli (2001) pastoralists do not oppose formal education; there has never been any conflict between pastoralism and education.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics among 3rd year CEE pupils

Socio-demographic characteristics	n=150	%
Age in years		
8 to 10	9	6
11 to 13	54	36
14 to 16	87	58
Gender		
Male	86	57.3
Female	64	42.7
Number of siblings		
2 to 4	32	21.3
5 to 8	91	60.7
9 and above	27	18
Number of siblings in middle school		
1	53	35.3
2	35	23.3
3	15	10
4	14	9.3
None	33	22
Number of siblings completed middle school		
Yes	28	18.7
No	122	81.3
Willingness to join formal middle school		
Yes	129	86
No	21	14
Support of parents for formal education		
Yes	134	89.3
No	16	10.7
Parents encouragement on doing homework at home		
Yes	117	78
No	33	22
Parents willingness for further education		
Yes	135	90
No	15	10

4.2 Selected demographic characteristics and qualification of CEE teachers

Table 2 shows that 5(27.8%) of teachers were within the age group of 26-28 years old, 6(38.9%) were within 29-31 years old and 7(33.3%) were within 32-35 years old. This notes that all of them are matured age to take care of the children. All the teachers were males. Further, according to the Sub-zone education officer above 90% of the CEE teachers in the sub-zone are males. This informs that there is a clear gender staff imbalance in the CEE centers which it could mean that there is no any to play the motherhood role during biological incidences that might happen among the girls and lack of role model. This might led to feeling less confident in front of male teachers and pupils and it could encourage the girls to drop out of school. For example, according to Carr-Hill (2005) Complementary Opportunity Primary Education (COPE) in Uganda to address the needs of the adolescent girls and stability, preference is given to married older women.

About three quarter 13(72.2%) of the teachers had Teacher Training Institute (TTI) certificate followed by 3(16.7%) who had diploma in education and the remaining 2(11.1%) had secondary school leaving certificate (Table 2). Most of the teachers (89%) are certified from regarded institutes which means equivalent to their counterparts in the formal elementary and middle schools. According to the sub-zone education officer above 90% of the CEE teachers in the sub-zone are TTI and Diploma holders. Further, some of them are also used to teach both in the CEE and the formal schools by shift. When it compared to Alternative Basic Education in Turkana (ABET) programs in Kenya and Alternative Basic Education in Karamoja (ABEK) programs in Uganda in which most teachers are school drop-outs or have low level of education and appointed by the community (De Sousa, 2006, Carr-Hill, 2005), most of the CEE teachers in Eritrea are at least TTI certificate holders and deployed by the ministry of education.

Regarding to the teaching experience among the CEE teachers, 3(16.7%) have 2-3 years, 7(38.9%) have 4-5 years and 8(44.4%) have 6-7 years of experiences (Table 2). This means more than 80% of the CEE teachers are relatively experienced in teaching. Two third of the CEE teachers 12(66.7%) trained in nomadic education while 6(33.3%) did not participate in any nomadic education trainings. This 66.7 % notes that CEE centers are relatively equipped with trained teachers. However, as the findings from the interview with the sub-zone education officer indicated, though some of them are not participated in nomadic education training, all of them had participated in a two week workshop about the program in 2014.

Table 2: Selected demographic characteristics and qualification of CEE teachers

Variable	n=18	%
Age in years		
26 to 28	5	27.8
29 to 31	7	38.9
32 to 35	6	33.3
Gender		
Male	18	100
Female	0	0
Level of education		
Diploma in education	3	16.7
TTI certificate	13	72.2
Secondary school certificate	2	11.1
Experience of teaching in years		
2 to 3	3	16.7
4 to 5	7	38.9
6 to 7	8	44.4
Training in nomadic education		
Yes	12	66.7
No	6	33.3

4.3 Enrolment in CEE and transition rate to middle school from 2011 to 2014 academic years

4.3.1 Enrolment by gender from 2011 to 2014 academic years

Figure 1 indicates that in 2010/11 academic year the enrollment of boys was more (124) than the girls' enrollment (92) and it shows a decreasing trend for the two consecutive academic years for both sexes (96 boys and 90 girls in 2011/12 and 81boys and 72 girls in 2012/13). However, it shows a sharp increase in the 2013/14 academic year especially among girls (93 boys and 110 girls). The average enrollment of girls was lower than their male counterparts for the first three academic years; nevertheless, they outnumbered the boys in the 2013/2014 academic year. The high number of enrollment indicates in general there were many children who are in need of education and signifies the reason behind the launch of the CEE program in this region. The sharp increase in enrollment of girls for the 2013/14 academic year would mean that the awareness of the society towards girl education is in its way to improve.

According to the in-depth interview with the education officer and the middle school director, the core reason for the decrease in enrollment prior to the 2013/2014 academic year was dropout of pupils before they reached their 3rd year stage. This was mainly due to the movement of the whole family to a new area far from the established CEE centers which makes it difficult for the children to be left behind their families including their services to the parents. Similarly, Kratli and Dyer (2009) argued that the problem of nomadic education is with provision of education in a static school, thus, governments need to use flexible mechanisms to meet the needs of the nomads. It was based on this context, according to the education officer of the sub-zone that they decided to follow the

majority of the pupils to the place where they are and back with them to the main CEE center after some time. This was proved by the increased number of enrollment in the 2013/2014 academic year.

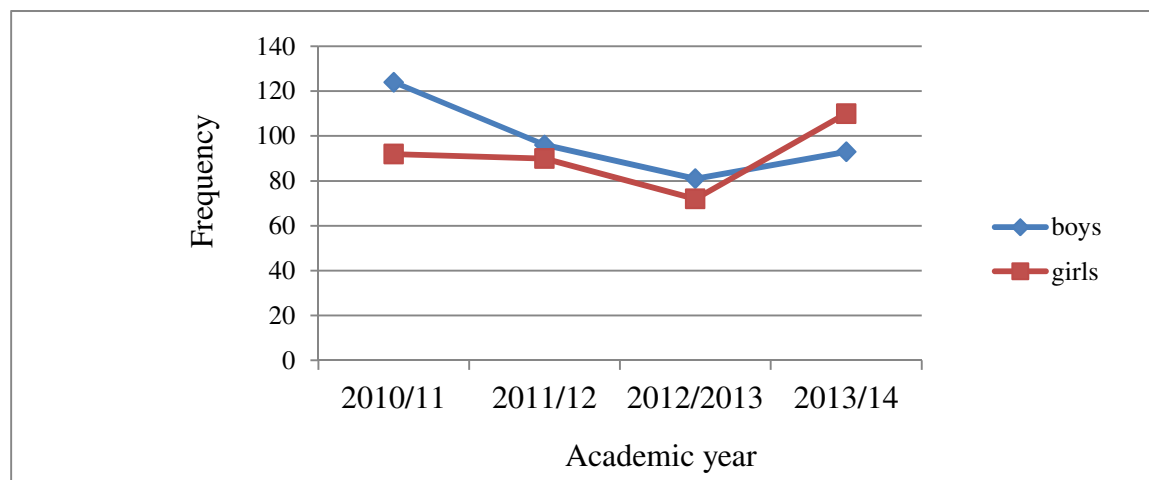


Figure 1: Enrolment by gender in the four CEE centers from 2011 to 2014 academic years

4.3.2 Transition rate to formal middle school from 2010/11 to 2013/14 academic years

Table 3 displays the number and rate of pupils who transited to formal middle school to complete the journey of basic education from four CEE centers. The rate of pupils transited from the four CEE centers to formal middle school is in a decreasing trend for the academic years 2011/12 and 2012/13 and an increase in 2013/14 academic year. For the four academic years the average rates were 88%, 78.5%, 75.8% and 88.2% respectively. On average the transition rate of these CEE centers was 82.6% and this indicates that they are performing well, in some cases better than schools in the regular system.

According to the education officer, the high transition or completion rate among the nomadic children motivates the government to expand the number of CEE centers in the sub-zone from four (4) to thirteen (13) in the years 2011 through 2014. In the 2014/15 academic year there were 915 pupils (475 boys and 440 girls) enrolled in these CEE centers and some CEE centers also phased out once the intended out of school children aged 9-14 have been exhausted. This is based on the idea that completion of CEE program is better than not starting education at all.

Table 3 further indicates that out of 758 CEE pupils 631(83%) were transited to middle school throughout the four academic years. However, according to the education officer out of the 631 transited to middle school only 220 (34.9%) of pupils were enrolled in middle school (grades 6, 7 and 8) in the seven middle schools of the sub-zone for the 2014/15 academic year. Nevertheless, the education officer said that most of the pupils who are willing to continue their education but cannot afford the living expenses in the middle schools in the sub-zone, prefer to join boarding schools of their choice in different parts of the country totally sponsored by the government. Further, concerning the influence of the transition of CEE in the enrollment of middle schools in the Sub-zone in comparison to the situation before the launch of the CEE program, both the middle school director and the education officer said, it is difficult to measure the difference due to nomadic nature of the region. The pupils may go to boarding schools even after studying one year in the middle schools in the sub-zone.

Table 3: Transition rate to formal middle school from 2010/11 to 2013/14 academic years

School Name	2010/11			2011/12			2012/13			2013/14		
	Enr, (n)	Tra, (n)	Rate of tra, (%)	Enr, (n)	Tra, (n)	Rate of tra, (%)	Enr, (n)	Tra, (n)	Rate of tra, (%)	Enr, (n)	Tra, (n)	Rate of tra, (%)
Filfle	55	51	92.7	57	36	63.2	50	27	54	76	66	86.8
Etnegat	65	59	90.8	61	52	85.2	54	44	81.5	84	78	92.9
Aritay	68	55	80.9	44	38	86.4	20	18	90	20	17	85
Ayun	28	25	89.3	24	20	83.3	29	27	93.1	23	18	78.3
Sub-Total	216	190	88	186	146	78.5	153	116	75.8	203	179	88.2

Abbreviations: Enr=Enrolled, Tra=Transition

4.4 Challenges of transition to middle school stated by the pupils

The pupils were requested to state the main challenges faced for transition from CEE to formal middle school. The responses are presented in Figure 2 which shows 116(77.3%) as long distance, 97(64.7%) economic problems and 107(69%) early marriage. The percentages were taken from the total responses but not respondents as some participants had more than one option to respond. These three problems were also the most highlighted by the CEE teachers. The economy of the pastoralists is highly dependent on their livestock and looking after the animals is the duty of the children. Therefore, attending classes is only possible through shift system by sharing the duties with their siblings. According to the education officer, however, the average distance between the middle schools and the CEE centers is 7 to 20 kilometers which makes it hard to perform duty sharing. Even though female enrollment in the CEE centers counts almost equal with their male counterparts, early marriage could also affect the transition and enrolment rate in middle schools.

The education officer and the middle school director further stated that problems like maturity/peer pressure and the problem of mismatch with the regular students of the formal middle school, uniform in the middle schools, learning materials, unaffordable living expenses like food and rent house in the town areas are another challenges hinder the CEE pupils to join formal middle school. Some old students are also active in the traditional gold mining around their area which results to early drop out of school as the middle school director said.

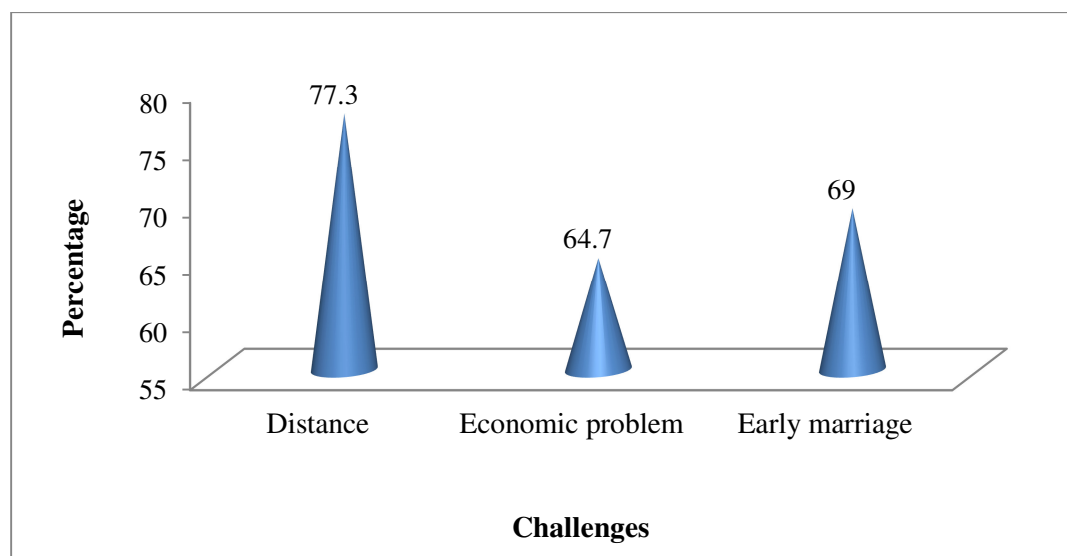


Figure 2: Challenges of transition to middle school among the pupils

4.5 Alternative measures to be taken to facilitate transition to formal middle school

Figure 3 demonstrates suggestions by the CEE teachers to overcome transition challenges. The figure shows that large percentage of the teachers indicated sensitizing the community to avoid female early marriage, upgrading CEE centers to formal middle school, improving economic status of the community and encouraging formal settlement of families were the main alternatives. This indicates that avoidance of early marriage could give enough time for the girls at least to complete middle school education. Upgrading of CEE centers to middle school could be the best solution to avoid distance as long as both the parents and the pupils branded it as equal as the formal schools. Further, improving the economic status of the nomadic community and encouraging them to settle in a permanent place could help to fund their children education and easily access to education and other services of the government.

The education officer and the middle school director also suggested that there should be a middle school at the nearby of the CEE for the villages far from the available middle schools even the same standard with CEE. The government and NGOs should create boarding or semi-boarding school in the sub-zone for the most disadvantaged pupils according to the education officer and the middle school director. They have also indicated that female teachers should be encouraged to work in the CEE centers in order to be a model and to motivate girl education. Further, they recommended that availability of clean drinking water and lunch at the middle schools and provision of sanitary towels for girls could attract more pupils from CEE to formal middle schools.

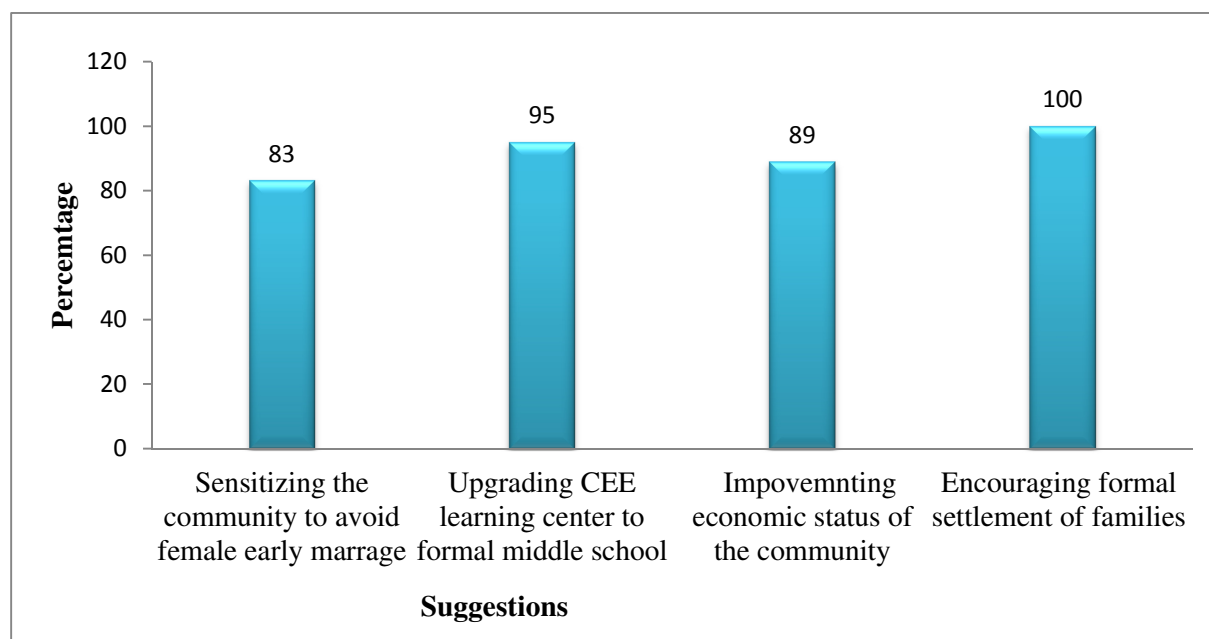


Figure 3: Suggestions of CEE teachers to facilitate transition of pupils to middle school

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of the findings of the study is summarized as per the research questions that led the study as follows:

- i. The transition rate of pupils from CEE centers to formal middle school education level is high. However, it is not possible for most of the pupils who transited to middle school to be enrolled in the available middle schools of the sub-zone because of distance and other challenges that hinder them.
- ii. The major challenges of nomadic education is not about acceptance to formal education, but their nature of economic activities and scattered settlement in which some of the CEE centers are located about 20 kilometers far from the formal middle schools.
- iii. Another challenge is the persistence of the nomadic parents on demanding the continuation of CEE programs to middle school level. This could compromise the quality of education of the nomadic children. Due to cost unfriendly, it would be mostly impossible for the government to equip every CEE center with human resources and modern technologies like laboratories, ICTs, etc. the same as the highly populated schools.
- iv. The main measures that could be taken to facilitate the transition of pupils from the CEE is through upgrading the CEE centers to formal middle school and encouraging formal settlements. This is because both the parents and the children adapted their CEE school as equivalent to the formal schools.

6. Recommendation

The findings from the study has revealed some implications, thus, the following recommendations may enable learners in the CEE centers to join formal middle school in order to complete the journey of basic education.

- i. The existing CEE centers should be upgraded to the role of formal middle school to avoid distance born challenges.
- ii. The government and NGOs should strive to create a boarding or semi-boarding school in Habero sub-zone for the most disadvantaged children of the nomads.
- iii. The government should encourage female teachers to work in the CEE centers in order to encourage and role model for the education of girl child.
- iv. Government authorities, religious bodies and National Unions should stand and play important role to convince the community to avoid early marriage.
- v. Availability of clean drinking water and lunch at the middle schools and provision of sanitary towels for girls could attract more pupils from CEE to formal middle schools.
- vi. The study was limited to the contribution of CEE programs towards transition of pupils from non-formal elementary education to formal middle school education. Therefore, it would be better the study to involve the survival and performance of the transited pupils in formal middle schools.
- vii. A large scale fellow up study including the four regions where the CEE programs are implemented should be carried out in order to produce a valuable feedback for policy makers and educational planners. This would help to share experiences and develop common senses with other countries in responding to the educational needs of the nomadic pastoralists.

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